Melinda French Gates Says Jeffrey Epstein Helped Break Up Marriage to Bill Gate

Noah Kirsch

Melinda French Gates acknowledged in an interview on Thursday that her divorce from Bill Gates came about in part because of his relationship with the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

“It was many things. But I did not like that he’d had meetings with Jeffrey Epstein,” she told CBS Mornings’ Gayle King. “I made that clear to him.”

French Gates said she met the sex offender “exactly one time, because I wanted to see who this man was. And I regretted it from the second I stepped in the door.

“He was abhorrent. He was evil personified. I had nightmares about it afterwards. So my heart breaks for these young women.”

As The Daily Beast reported in May, French Gates had warned her ex-husband about Epstein after meeting the disgraced financier at his Upper East Side mansion in 2013, people familiar with the matter said last year.

Bill Gates issued a statement to CBS stating that his meetings with Epstein were a “substantial error in judgment” and a “mistake that I regret deeply.”

The former billionaire couple remain “friendly” but are not friends, French Gates said, though they continue to jointly oversee their namesake foundation, one of the largest private charities in the world.

In the CBS interview, she offered additional details on their 27-year marriage.

“On the day I got married, I never thought I would end up being divorced,” she said.

While Bill Gates has admitted to having at least one affair during their marriage, “I thought we had worked through some of that,” she said. “There just came a point in time where there was enough there that I realized it just wasn't healthy. And I couldn't trust what we had.”

She declined to confirm rumors that Gates had multiple affairs during their marriage, saying “those are questions Bill needs to answer.”

French Gates said she knew the announcement of their divorce last spring would come as a surprise to many people, and the dissolution of their marriage was, of course, painful.

“I had a lot of tears for many days. I mean days where I'm literally laying on the floor of the carpet,” she said.

“I certainly was angry. I mean this is painful stuff. And at the end of the day, though, I started on this journey of healing, and I feel like I’m starting to get to the other side.”

French Gates, currently worth $6.2 billion, according to *Forbes* estimates, is open to finding love once more, she told King: “I hope that happens for me again. You know, I'm dipping my toe in that water.”

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